BEFORE THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA

In the Matter of the Accusation)	
Against:)	
)	
)	
GABRIEL HERNANDEZ, P.A.)	Case No. 950-2018-001966
)	
Physician Assistant)	
License No. PA 17831)	
)	
Respondent)	
)	

DECISION AND ORDER

The attached Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order is hereby adopted as the Decision and Order of the Physician Assistant Board, Department of Consumer Affairs, State of California.

This Decision shall become effective at 5:00 p.m. on March 17, 2022.

IT IS SO ORDERED March 10, 2022.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD

Rozana Khan

Executive Officer

1	ROB BONTA				
2					
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General ROBERT W. LINCOLN				
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 316290				
5					
6	P.O. Box 85266				
7	Telephone: (619) 738-9453 Facsimile: (619) 645-2012				
8	Attorneys for Complainant				
9					
10	BEFORE THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD				
11	DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA				
12					
13	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 950-2018-001966			
1415	GABRIEL HERNANDEZ, P.A. 1011 W. Alberta St. Anaheim, CA 92805	STIPULATED SURRENDER OF LICENSE AND DISCIPLINARY ORDER			
16	Physician Assistant License No. PA 17831				
17					
18	IT IS HEREBY STIPULATED AND AGREED by and between the parties to the above-				
19	entitled proceedings that the following matters are true:				
20	<u>PARTIES</u>				
21	1. Rozana Khan (Complainant) is the Executive Officer of the Physician Assistant				
22	Board (Board). She brought this action solely in her official capacity and is represented in this				
23	matter by Rob Bonta, Attorney General of the State of California, by Robert W. Lincoln, Deputy				
24	4 Attorney General.				
25	2. Gabriel Hernandez, P.A. (Respondent) is representing himself in this proceeding and				
26	has chosen not to exercise his right to be represented by counsel.				
27					
28					
		1			

3. On or about February 16, 2005, the Board issued Physician Assistant License No. PA 17831 to Gabriel Hernandez, P.A. (Respondent). The Physician Assistant License expired on November 30, 2020, and has not been renewed.

JURISDICTION

4. Accusation No. 950-2018-001966 was filed before the Board, and is currently pending against Respondent. The Accusation and all other statutorily required documents were properly served on Respondent on June 17, 2021. Respondent timely filed his Notice of Defense contesting the Accusation. A copy of Accusation No. 950-2018-001966 is attached as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference.

ADVISEMENT AND WAIVERS

- Respondent has carefully read, and understands the charges and allegations in Accusation No. 950-2018-001966. Respondent also has carefully read, and understands the effects of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order.
- 6. Respondent is fully aware of his legal rights in this matter, including the right to a hearing on the charges and allegations in the Accusation; the right to be represented by counsel, at his own expense; the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against him; the right to present evidence and to testify on his own behalf; the right to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents; the right to reconsideration and court review of an adverse decision; and all other rights accorded by the California Administrative Procedure Act and other applicable laws.
- 7. Respondent voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently waives and gives up each and every right set forth above.

CULPABILITY

- 8. Respondent admits the truth of each and every charge and allegation in Accusation 950-2018-001966, agrees that causes exists for discipline and hereby surrenders his Physician Assistant License No. PA 17831 for the Board's formal acceptance.
- 9. This stipulation shall be subject to approval by the Board. Respondent understands and agrees that counsel for Complainant and the staff of the Board may communicate directly

with the Board regarding this stipulation and surrender, without notice to or participation by Respondent. By signing the stipulation, Respondent understands and agrees that he may not withdraw his agreement or seek to rescind the stipulation prior to the time the Board considers and acts upon it. If the Board fails to adopt this stipulation as its Decision and Order, the Stipulated Surrender and Disciplinary Order shall be of no force or effect, except for this paragraph, it shall be inadmissible in any legal action between the parties, and the Board shall not be disqualified from further action by having considered this matter.

- 10. The parties understand and agree that Portable Document Format (PDF) and facsimile copies of this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order, including PDF and facsimile signatures thereto, shall have the same force and effect as the originals.
- 11. In consideration of the foregoing admissions and stipulations, the parties agree that the Board may, without further notice or formal proceeding, issue and enter the following Order:

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Physician Assistant License No. PA 17831, issued to Respondent Gabriel Hernandez, P.A., is surrendered and accepted by the Board.

- 1. The surrender of Respondent's Physician Assistant License and the acceptance of the surrendered license by the Board shall constitute the imposition of discipline against Respondent. This stipulation constitutes a record of the discipline and shall become a part of Respondent's license history with the Board.
- 2. Respondent shall lose all rights and privileges as a Physician Assistant in California as of the effective date of the Board's Decision and Order.
- 3. Respondent shall cause to be delivered to the Board his pocket license and, if one was issued, his wall certificate on or before the effective date of the Decision and Order.
- 4. If Respondent ever files an application for licensure or a petition for reinstatement in the State of California, the Board shall treat it as a petition for reinstatement. Respondent must comply with all the laws, regulations and procedures for reinstatement of a revoked or surrendered license in effect at the time the petition is filed, and all of the charges and allegations

ACCEPTANCE

I have carefully read the Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order. I understand the stipulation and the effect it will have on my Physician Assistant License. I enter into this Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, and agree to be bound by the Decision and Order of the Physician Assistant Board.

DATED: 1/30/2022

GABRIEL HERNANDEZ, P.A.
Respondent

ENDORSEMENT

The foregoing Stipulated Surrender of License and Disciplinary Order is hereby respectfully submitted for consideration by the Physician Assistant Board of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

DATED: 2/7/2022

Respectfully submitted,

ROB BONTA
Attorney General of California
ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ
Supervising Deputy Attorney General

ROBERT W. LINCOLN
Deputy Attorney General
Attorneys for Complainant

SD2021800355

10.

.12

Exhibit A

Accusation No. 950-2018-001966

	1			
1	ROB BONTA			
2	Attorney General of California ALEXANDRA M. ALVAREZ			
3	Supervising Deputy Attorney General			
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 316290			
5	600 West Broadway, Suite 1800			
6	P.O. Box 85266 San Diego, CA 92186-5266			
7	Telephone: (619) 738-9453 Facsimile: (619) 645-2012			
8	Attorneys for Complainant			
9				
10	BEFORE THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD			
11	DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS STATE OF CALIFORNIA			
12	STATE OF CA	ALL OKIM		
13	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 950-2018-001966		
14	Gabriel Hernandez, P.A.	ACCUSATION		
15	1011 W ALBERTA ST ANAHEIM, CA 92805			
16	Physician Assistant License			
17	No. PA 17831,			
18	Respondent.			
19				
20	PART	CIES		
21	1. Rozana Khan (Complainant) brings this Accusation solely in her official capacity as			
22	the Executive Officer of the Physician Assistant Board, Department of Consumer Affairs (Board).			
23	2. On or about February 16, 2005, the Physician Assistant Board issued Physician			
24	Assistant License No. PA 17831 to Gabriel Hernandez, P.A. (Respondent). The Physician			
25	Assistant License expired on November 30, 2020, and has not been renewed.			
26	///			
27	///			
28	///			
	1	•		
	(GABRIEL HERNANDEZ, P.A.) ACCUSATION NO. 950-2018-001966			

JURISDICTION

- 3. This Accusation is brought before the Board, under the authority of the following laws. All section references are to the Business and Professions Code (Code) unless otherwise indicated.
 - 4. Section 3504.1 of the Code states:

Protection of the public shall be the highest priority for the Physician Assistant Board in exercising its licensing, regulatory, and disciplinary functions. Whenever the protection of the public is inconsistent with other interests sought to be promoted, the protection of the public shall be paramount.

- 5. Section 3527 of the Code states:
- (a) The board may order the denial of an application for, or the issuance subject to terms and conditions of, or the suspension or revocation of, or the imposition of probationary conditions upon a PA license after a hearing as required in Section 3528 for unprofessional conduct that includes, but is not limited to, a violation of this chapter, a violation of the Medical Practice Act, or a violation of the regulations adopted by the board or the Medical Board of California.
- (f) The expiration, cancellation, forfeiture, or suspension of a PA license by operation of law or by order or decision of the board or a court of law, the placement of a license on a retired status, or the voluntary surrender of a license by a licensee shall not deprive the board of jurisdiction to commence or proceed with any investigation of, or action or disciplinary proceeding against, the licensee or to render a decision suspending or revoking the license.
 - 6. Section 3528 of the Code states:

Any proceedings involving the denial, suspension or revocation of the application for licensure or the license of a PA or the application for approval or the approval of an approved program under this chapter shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

(b) The suspension, expiration, or forfeiture by operation of law of a license issued by a board in the department, or its suspension, forfeiture, or cancellation by order of a court of law, or its surrender without the written consent of the board, shall not, during any period in which it may be renewed, restored, reissued, or reinstated, deprive the board of its authority to institute or continue a disciplinary proceeding against the licensee upon any ground provided by law or to enter an order suspending or revoking the license or otherwise taking disciplinary action against the licensee on any such ground.

COST RECOVERY

- 13. Section 125.3 if the Code States:
- (a) Except as otherwise provided by law, in any order issued in resolution of a disciplinary proceeding before any board within the department or before the Osteopathic Medical Board upon request of the entity bringing the proceeding, the administrative law judge may direct a licensee found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.
- (b) In the case of a disciplined licentiate that is a corporation or a partnership, the order may be made against the licensed corporate entity or licensed partnership.
- (c) A certified copy of the actual costs, or a good faith estimate of costs where actual costs are not available, signed by the entity bring the proceeding or its designated representative shall be prima facie evidence of reasonable costs of investigation and prosecution of the case. The costs shall include the amount of investigative and enforcement costs up to the date of the hearing, including, but not limited to, charges imposed by the Attorney General.
- (d) The administrative law judge shall make a proposed finding of the amount of reasonable costs of investigation and prosecution of the case when requested pursuant to subdivision (a). The finding of the administrative law judge with regard to costs shall not be reviewable by the board to increase the cost award. The board may reduce or eliminate the cost award, or remand to the administrative law judge if the proposed decision fails to make a finding on costs requested pursuant to subdivision (a).
- (e) In order for recovery of costs is made and timely payment is not made as directed in the board's decision, the board may enforce the order for prepayment in any appropriate court. This right of enforcement shall be in addition to any other rights the board may have as to any licensee to pay costs.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

CURES Data

- 14. A 24-month query of Respondent's CURES¹ record data for the approximate timeframe of November 26, 2016 through November 26, 2018 shows that Respondent prescribed over 5,900 controlled substances during that period, approximately 52% of which were for Oxycodone², a schedule II narcotic. Of those Oxycodone prescriptions, approximately 97% were prescribed by Respondent at 30 milligram strength, for a total of over 446,000 dosage units prescribed within the time frame. 30 milligrams is the maximum strength of short-acting oxycodone.
- 15. Respondent's CURES data showed that his prescriptions for oxycodone and other narcotics were often prescribed in similar dangerous cocktails, including in particular with benzodiazepines³ (e.g. alprazolam⁴) and/or the muscle relaxant carisoprodol⁵. When Oxycodone is prescribed with benzodiazepine and/or the muscle relaxant carisoprodol, this combination of drugs is called "the holy trinity" and is highly sought after by individuals who have a prescription drug addiction and when taken together, it also magnifies the risk of overall overdose death. Respondent's CURES data showed his pattern of prescribing opiates with benzodiazepines and carisoprodol.

¹ The Controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES), California's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) maintained by the Department of Justice (DOJ), is a database of Schedule II, III, and IV controlled substance prescriptions dispensed in California.

² Oxycodone (including brand names OxyContin and Percocet) is a schedule II controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 11055(b)(1)(N) and a controlled substance and a dangerous drug as defined in Section 4022

³ Benzodiazepines a family of drugs that depress central nervous system activity (CNS depressants) and also produce sedation and relaxation of skeletal muscles. Benzodiazepines include the prototype chlordiazepoxide; other anxiolytics such as alprazolam, clonazepam, and diazepam; and hypnotics such as estazolam, flurazepam, quazepam, temazepam, and triazolam.

⁴ Alprazolam (including brand names Xanax) is a benzodiazepine that affects chemicals in the brain that may be unbalanced in people with anxiety. It is used to treat anxiety disorders and anxiety caused by depression. Alprazolam is a Schedule IV controlled substance and a dangerous drug as defined in Section 4022.

⁵ Carisoprodol (including brand names Soma) is a medication used for musculoskeletal pain. Carisoprodol is a Schedule IV controlled substance and a dangerous drug as defined in Section 4022.

CA.

Cooperating Source and Undercover Prescription Purchases from Respondent.

- 16. In or around September 2018, a federal investigator recruited a Patient Cooperating Source⁶ ("CS") who was a patient of Respondent and who received controlled substances via prescriptions written by Respondent at Vortex Wellness and Aesthetics⁷ on a monthly basis.
- 17. On or around November 6, 2018, federal agents conducted a "buy-walk" from Respondent utilizing the CS who was in possession of an undercover recording device. During CS's brief interaction with Respondent, Respondent gave CS prescriptions for 20 pills of 10-mg Valium (a schedule IV benzodiazepine commonly known as diazepam), 45 pills of maximum 2-mg strength Xanax, 180 pills of 30-mg Oxycodone, 5 pills of maximum strength Norco (a brand name for the schedule II narcotic hydrocodone), and 60 pills of 100-mg Colace (a non-controlled stool softener). The visit between CS and Respondent lasted only a few minutes and Respondent conducted no physical examination of CS.
- 18. According to CS, Respondent had the prescriptions already filled out when CS entered Respondent's office. CS also stated that Respondent did not conduct any physical examination or asked about whether CS had any pain.
- 19. On or about December 10, 2018, federal agents conducted a second "buy/walk" from Respondent at Vortex, utilizing CS. CS received a prescription for 180 pills of 30-mg Oxycodone, 40 pills of 2-mg alprazolam, 8 pills of 10-mg hydrocodone, 20 pills of diazepam, and 60 pills of Colace. Respondent had already written out each prescription before CS arrived in Respondent's office. Again, Respondent did not perform a physical exam and did not discuss whether CS was experiencing any pain.
- 20. On or about January 16, 2019, federal agents conducted a third "buy/walk" from Respondent at Vortex with CS. Respondent added Dilaudid (a brand name for the Schedule II opiate hydromorphone) to CS's prescription as a test trial, because CS is on long acting narcotics. CS obtained a prescription for 180 pills of 30-mg Oxycodone, 30 pills of 4-mg hydromorphone.

⁶ The names of patient are abbreviated to protect their privacy rights. The names will be provided to Respondent upon written request for discovery.

⁷ Respondent's place of employment, located at 4195 N. Viking Way #130, Long Beach,

3

4

45 pills of 2-mg alprazolam, 5 pills of 10-mg hydrocodone, 20 pills of 10-mg diazepam, and 60 pills of Colace. Again, Respondent had pre-written these prescriptions before CS arrived in Respondent's office.

Arrest of Oxycodone Dealer Receiving Prescriptions from Respondent.

- On or about January 18, 2019, federal investigators arrested MV⁸ a patient of Respondent. During the traffic stop, MV's vehicle was searched and various medical documentation was found in his vehicle including (1) VORTEX forms dated January 16, 2019, identifying MV; and a printout of MV's CURES records showing that, between October 29, 2018 and January 7, 2019, MV had filled nine prescriptions for 30-mg Oxycodone, 4-mg hydrophone, and 350-mg of carisoprodol, all issued by Respondent.
- 22. From September 2017 through January 2019, MV filled prescriptions from Respondent for a total of 3,240 tablets of 30-mg Oxycodone, 1,020 tablets of 350-mg carisoprodol, and 540 tablets of 4-mg hydromorphone.

Conviction

- 23. On or about March 26, 2019, the United States Attorney's Office Central District of California filed a criminal complaint against Respondent in the matter of The United States of America v. Gabriel Hernandez, Case No. 2:19-CR-00176-CAS, Respondent was charged with one felony count for Distribution of Oxycodone in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1),(b)(1)(C).
- 24. On or about June 3, 2020, in the matter of The United States of America v. Gabriel Hernandez, Case No. 2:19-CR-00176-CAS, Respondent pled guilty to one felony count for Distribution of Oxycodone in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)(1),(b)(1)(C). Respondent was sentenced to be imprisoned for eighteen (18) months, pay a total fine of \$13,000 and upon release from imprisonment, Respondent shall be placed on supervised release for a term of three (3) years under various terms and conditions.

///

///

27

⁸ The names of patient are abbreviated to protect their privacy rights. The names will be provided to Respondent upon written request for discovery.

(GABRIEL HERNANDEZ, P.A.) ACCUSATION NO. 950-2018-001966

FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE 1 (General Unprofessional Conduct) 2 28. Respondent has further subjected his Physician Assistant License No. PA 17831 to 3 disciplinary action under sections 3527 and 2234, as defined by section 2234, of the Code, in that 4 he has engaged in conduct which breaches the rules or ethical code of the medical profession, or 5 conduct which is unbecoming to a member in good standing of the medical profession, and which 6 demonstrates an unfitness to practice medicine, as more particularly alleged in paragraphs 14 7 8 through 27, above, which are hereby incorporated by reference and re-alleged as if fully set forth 9 herein. 10 PRAYER WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, 11 and that following the hearing, the Physician Assistant Board issue a decision: 12 1. Revoking or suspending Physician Assistant License Number PA 17831, issued to 13 Gabriel Hernandez, P.A.; 14 2. Ordering Respondent Gabriel Hernandez, P.A., to pay the Physician Assistant Board 15 the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of this case, pursuant to Business and 16 Professions Code section 125.3; and 17 3. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper. 18 19 DATED: June 17, 2021 20 21 Executive Officer Physician Assistant Board 22 Department of Consumer Affairs State of California 23 Complainant 24 25 SD2021800355 26 27 28